(123) Talked by tel Tilmon
November 23, 1988.

MINNESOTA-MANITOBA AGREEMENT

ON

ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TRADE OPPORTUNITIES

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Background

The Governments of Minnesota and Manitoba share a strong interest in expanding economic development and employment opportunities throughout the State and the Province.

Both jurisdictions are also firmly committed to encouraging greater diversification in economic activity and to pursuing new initiatives designed to strengthen the economies of both urban and rural areas.

The Governor of Minnesota and the Premier of Manitoba recognize that enhanced economic cooperation, particularly enhanced trade between the State and the Province, will provide significant new opportunities for job creation and job security, as well as more balanced and stable growth.

Merchandise trade between Minnesota and Manitoba now exceeds $500 million annually. A primary objective of this agreement is to increase trade and other beneficial economic contacts to the mutual advantage of Minnesota and Manitoba and to maximize opportunities for the State and the Province arising from the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement which is set to come into effect on January 1, 1989.

Establishment of Governor's-Premier's Council on Economic Cooperation and Trade Opportunities

To provide a focal point for improved economic cooperation between Minnesota and Manitoba and to assist in the achievement of the objectives of this agreement, the State and Province agree to establish a Governor's-Premier's Council on Economic Cooperation and Trade Opportunities.

The Council shall be co-chaired by David Speer, Commissioner, Department of Trade and Economic Development, for Minnesota, and by Donald Leitch, Clerk of the Executive Council, for Manitoba.

Four other members from Minnesota and four other members from Manitoba will be named in due course.

The Council may establish special advisory groups or subcommittees to assist it in its work.

At least half the members of the Council from each jurisdiction will be from the private sector.

The Council shall meet quarterly and shall report progress directly to the Governor and the Premier.

Priorities for Minnesota-Manitoba Economic Cooperation

The Governor and the Premier agree that their newly-established Council on Economic Cooperation and Trade Opportunities will be asked to submit interim reports and recommendations for cooperative action by the Spring of 1989 on the following priorities:

(1) Maximizing Benefits of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement

The Council will be asked to identify options for ensuring that Minnesota and Manitoba can cooperate more effectively in taking advantage of new trade opportunities for the region. Major emphasis should be placed on opportunities in areas of the State and the Province which are relatively close to the international boundary.

(2) Health Industry Development

Minnesota has fostered development of the medical industry as a priority under its "Minnesota Medical Alley" program. The Minnesota program encourages technical collaboration, licensing and trade with other world-class medical centers and has looked to Canada and Manitoba as one of its first world-wide affiliates.

Manitoba has signed a five-year agreement with the Government of Canada establishing a strategy to develop important elements of the Canadian health care industry in Manitoba. Manitoba is also to be the site of a large-scale national Laboratory Centre for Disease Control.

With the potential to achieve together an international complex of technological and industrial excellence in the health care industry unique in North America, the Medical Alley Association of Minnesota and the Health Industry Development Initiative of Manitoba will be invited to jointly develop and inform the Council of specific proposals for cooperation. Projects in areas such as promotion, and linkages between medical and industrial research institutions, academic and business communities, and manufacturing and marketing companies and consortia, will be investigated over the next six months.

(3) Environmental Initiatives-Sustainable Development

Promising new approaches are now being developed in North America and Western Europe to ensure that major economic decisions are environmentally sound and sustainable. Organizations in Minnesota and Manitoba have been in the forefront of work on these new approaches.

Minnesota-Manitoba environmental cooperation has already been established through the Partnership for Sustainable Development, the International Coalition for Land and Water Stewardship in the Red River Basin, and the 1986 Manitoba-Minnesota-North Dakota cooperation agreement on the issue of high-level radioactive waste repository sites.

The Council will be asked to recommend options for building on this existing cooperative base. The Council will also provide input in planning for the recently-announced international Centre for Sustainable Development to be located in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

(4) Rural Community Development

Both the State and the Province are undertaking a number of policies and programs aimed at strengthening the economies of rural communities.

The Council will be asked to serve as a focus for the exchange of information on the success of these initiatives and possible options for cooperation in dealing with the challenges faced by rural areas on both sides of the border.

(5) Tourism Development

Residents of Minnesota and Manitoba represent each other's largest existing market for international tourism.

The Council will be asked to review existing tourism marketing cooperation between the Province and the State and to recommend options for cooperative marketing, in conjunction with other partners in the region, where that may be appropriate.

Initially, tourism information offices operated by the State and the Province will be directed to distribute a full range of travel literature from the other jurisdiction.

(6) Transportation Development

Minnesota and Manitoba have enjoyed strong transportation links as key distribution centers in their respective regions. However, some of these transportation links require major improvement. For its part, Manitoba is committed to a substantial upgrading of Highway 75, the principal road link between the Province and the State.

The Council will be asked to review all major transportation connections between Minnesota and Manitoba in light of the objectives of this agreement and to recommend actions the State and Province could consider to improve those links.

Information exchanges will also be encouraged on a full range of transportation policy issues of mutual interest.

(7) Cultural Enterprises

The cultural heritage and cultural life of the State of Minnesota and the Province of Manitoba are reknowned across the continent and worldwide.

While some cultural exchanges take place between the State and the Province, much more could be done to share the social and economic benefits citizens of both jurisdictions gain from their cultural resources.

The Council will be asked to suggest options for improving all forms of cultural exchanges between the Province and the State. Input will be sought from a broad range of cultural groups.

(8) Electrical Energy

Manitoba's hydroelectric resources are an important and secure source of Minnesota's growing electrical energy needs.

At the same time, both Manitoba and Minnesota benefit significantly from diversity exchanges during periods of peak power requirements.

The primary focus for State-Province cooperation on electrical energy issues will continue to be the major utilities in the two jurisdictions. However, the Council will be asked to stay in close touch with the agencies involved and to keep informed of the details of existing and proposed contractual arrangements.

Federal Government Representation

The Governor and Premier regard this agreement as complementary to, and supportive of, the efforts which the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada have made to improve overall relations between the two neighbouring countries.

In line with both federal governments' overall responsibilities for U.S.-Canada relations, federal representatives from the two countries will be invited to participate in the activities of the Governor's-Premier's Council.

Governor's-Premier's Consultations

The Governor and Premier agree to consult on progress under this agreement following the submission of the Council's first interim report and to meet at least annually to review matters of mutual interest.

Signed at St. Paul, Minnesota this 21st day of November, 1988.

The Hon. Rudy Perpich
Governor of Minnesota

The Hon. Gary Filmon
Premier of Manitoba